



Tom Barrett
Mayor, City of Milwaukee

For Immediate Release:
September 22, 2010

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MAYOR BARRETT FIGHTS FOR FEMA AID
Individual Assistance Granted

MILWAUKEE - On September 18th FEMA announced Milwaukee residents will be eligible for individual aid following the July flooding. Originally, the state's request for Individual Assistance was denied.

FEMA denied the state's request for Individual Assistance because they deemed the damage insufficient to qualify for individual federal aid. In response to the denial, Mayor Barrett said, "We were all disappointed with FEMA's initial decision, but we were not deterred."

In the immediate aftermath of the July flooding, Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett worked tirelessly with representatives from FEMA and other state and local officials to ensure that the citizens affected by the floods would receive assistance.

On August 13, 2010 Mayor Barrett wrote a supplemental letter to FEMA requesting that they come back to Milwaukee and visit more homes ravaged by the storm. Additionally, Mayor Barrett launched an effort to produce, distribute and collect flood damage survey forms. The City collected over 1,500 forms. Following the collection of those flood survey forms, the City staffed phone and an additional 231 properties were identified as having suffered major damage.

"The situation in Milwaukee is much more serious than that designation implies," Mayor Barrett said. "Damage to mechanicals such as furnaces, water heaters and electrical systems can render a property uninhabitable. The recent economic downturn has resulted in many Milwaukeeans converting their basements into living space which means more than one family was impacted by the flooding at certain properties. Accordingly, I felt it was necessary for FEMA to return to Milwaukee in order to conduct a more thorough assessment based on the unique character of many Milwaukee residencies."

On August 31, 2010 Mayor Tom Barrett's request was granted and the FEMA team was led on site visits to some of the 231 homes identified during the appeals process over the next three days.

When asked about the process, Mayor Barrett remarked, “When we started the process of recovering from the July storms, I said that we would leave no stone unturned in our efforts to get assistance for our residents and I am happy to report that our efforts paid off.”

In addition to the flood response and appeal efforts, immediately after the flood, the City launched a clean-up effort to assist the elderly and disabled. To date, the City and its partner organizations have cleaned 135 homes. The Milwaukee Community Service Corps and volunteer organizations continue to assist the elderly and disabled.

The Individual Assistance declaration for Grant and Milwaukee Counties will help pay for temporary housing, home repairs and other serious disaster-related expenses.

“This is a huge relief for the people of Milwaukee,” Mayor Barrett said of the declaration. “I was committed to doing everything in my power to alleviate some of the financial burden imposed by the flooding. I personally appealed to President Obama, along with Congresswoman Gwen Moore. We stressed the gravity of our situation and the need for federal assistance. I’m grateful FEMA responded to our need.”

Milwaukee residents may apply for aid online at <http://www.disasterassistance.gov> or call the FEMA hotline at 1-800-621-FEMA/3362. Two Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) for residents who were affected by severe storms, flooding or tornadoes July 20-24 have also been opened. Residents will be able to discuss their individual situations with disaster specialists. The center locations are as follows:

City of Milwaukee Dept. of Public Works
3850 N. 35th St. Milwaukee, Wis. 53216

Milwaukee Brotherhood of Firefighters Association
7717 W. Good Hope Road
Milwaukee, Wis. 53223